

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The present invention helps increase the reliability, throughput, and ease-of-configuration for data networks. The invention sets "time-to-live" ("TTL") values for packets which may be routed through a network within a router based on a selected route, rather than by a host computer or using a fixed pre-configured value. Upon receiving an incoming data packet from a host computer, a TTL value is set which tailored to network conditions and the route selected. The data packet is then routed within the network using the tailored TTL and is discarded more quickly than if a large default value were used.